

β⁶ (d) inducing the webs to shift with the reel the length of a predetermined rotational angle to provide folding by holding the webs alternately against the surfaces of the first and second reels which rotate in opposite directions to pull the reel forward; and

(e) joining the ends of the webs so that the webs form a continuous whole whose length corresponds to the combined length of the webs.

REMARKS

This submission is in response to the Official Action dated May 1, 2002. Applicants submit herewith a Petition for an extension of time for three months with the appropriate fee. Claims 19-25 have been cancelled by this amendment. New claim 26 has been added. Therefore, claims 12-18 and 26 are pending and at issue.

New claim 26 is supported by the specification at page 3, lines 1-21. The amendments have been made to expedite allowance of the application and without admission and without prejudice to applicants' right to pursue the cancelled subject matter in this or another patent application.

Reconsideration of the above identified application, in view of the above amendments and the following remarks, is respectfully requested.

Information Disclosure Statement

3721

The Examiner has objected to the information disclosure statement filed on February 12, 2001 as failing to comply with 37 C.F.R. 1.98(a)(2) because the applicants have not provided copies of the listed foreign patents. Pursuant to a telephone discussion with Examiner Linda B. Johnson on June 22, 2000 in connection with Application Serial No. 09/064,755, now U.S. Patent No. 6,176,068, it was agreed that only one complete set of the documents cited on the Form PTO-1449 submitted in applications that are a part of this series of applications (which include those applications/patents listed in Appendix I to the IDS filed February 12, 2001) would be provided with the Information Disclosure Statement filed in U.S. Application Serial No. 09/263,889.

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Nonetheless, applicants have submitted under separate cover a Supplemental Information Disclosure with copies of the foreign patents cited. Applicants have also attached a copy of the Amborsky publication which was listed on the previously filed IDS.

For those foreign publications listed which are not in English, an explanation of the relevance of the publication is provided in the form of an English language abstract.

Further, applicants note that the Examiner has not acknowledged that he has considered the related applications listed in Appendix 1 of the February 12, 2001 Information Disclosure Statement. For the Examiner's convenience, applicants have added these related applications, all of which have now issued as

U.S. patents, to PTO Form 1449 and have provided copies of such patents with the Supplemental Information Disclosure Statement.

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Specification

GROUP 3700

The Examiner has objected to the application as not containing an abstract of the disclosure. However, an abstract was submitted as a part of the International Application as filed under 35 U.S.C. 371(c)(2). For completeness however, a new abstract has been included herewith.

The Examiner has also objected to the arrangement of the specification as not containing the appropriate section headings. Applicants appreciate the Examiner's suggestions and have added or amended section headings where appropriate.

35 U.S.C. §102 and §103 Rejections

Claims 19-25 stand rejected under §102(b) and/or §103 as being unpatentable over Shore et al. However, these claims have been cancelled, thus rendering these rejections moot.

The Examiner has also rejected claims 12-18 under §103(a) as unpatentable over Shore et al. in view of Gebhardt. The Examiner contends that Shore discloses folding two or more webs into superimposed layers by causing the webs to move with two rotating reels at a length of a predetermined angle to

provide for folding. The Examiner further argues that Gebhardt discloses a method of packaging a web by directing the web to a nip formed by rotating reels and a mechanical gripper projection to interfold bags.

However, Shore does not disclose folding webs by causing them to move with rotating reels. Shore discloses that the web is extended vertically through a guide member which moves back and forth horizontally to lay the web into a vertically folded stack. Shore does not disclose that this guide member contains "rotating reels" as stated by the Examiner. The entire guide member shown in Shore *reciprocates* horizontally through angular limits. There is no disclosure of the used of *rotary* movement using rotating reels to fold the web.

Gebhardt discloses the use of rotating drums with gripping devices as part of a mechanism to interlock separate bags. These gripping devices interfold bags so that each bag is interlocked with a preceeding and succeeding bag in a staggered manner. This method of folding results in an effect similar to a box of tissues whereas as one tissue is removed the next pops out of the box. Gebhardt does not disclose that the bags are joined together in any way. The staggered folded bags do not form a continuous connected web, as required by the present claims.

A person of ordinary skill in the art would not have combined the teachings of Shore with the teachings of Gebhardt. Shore does not teach or suggest any type of rotating wheels used for folding while Gebhardt does not teach

folding a slit web of narrower webs to form adjacent stacks of folded material.

Further, a combination of these references does not teach or suggest that the ends of the two or more narrower webs be joined together to form a continuous whole whose length corresponds to a combined length of the two or more narrower webs.

Additionally, with respect to claims 13, 14 and 18, the Examiner contends that it would have been obvious to have modified the structure of Shore by having the two or more narrower webs joined together by sewing, taping, gluing, etc., since the applicants have not disclosed that the webs are joined for any particular purpose.

Shore does not disclose even the possibility of connecting the separate strips forming each individual stack in the package. Rather each stack of strip material is consumed *before* the next strip is *manually* inserted into the recapping machine of Shore. Applicants have disclosed that the narrower webs of the present invention are joined to form a continuous whole whose length corresponds to a combined length of the two or more narrower webs, so that after being packaged, the webs may be distributed from the package as a single continuous whole. See page 4, line 35 to page 5, line 14. Further, packages may be placed in succession and the tail end of one package joined to forward end of the next package, thus allowing several packages to be chained together for continuous distribution. See *id.*

For the foregoing reasons, applicants submit that the rejections of claims 12-18 under §103 has been overcome and thus request that these rejections be withdrawn.

CONCLUSION

Therefore, in view of the above amendments and remarks, it is respectfully requested that the application be reconsidered and that all pending claims be allowed and the case passed to issue.

If there are any other issues remaining which the Examiner believes could be resolved through either a Supplemental Response or an Examiner's Amendment, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,



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PATENT TRADEMARK OFFICE

Docket No: 1313/1G310-USO

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Application of: Hyvarinen, Paavo; Niemi, Tapio; Makinen, Jarmo

Serial No.: 09/582,830

Art Unit: 3721

Confirmation No.: 2592

Filed: September 21, 2000

Examiner: Tawfik, Sameh

For: METHOD OF PACKAGING A WEB, AND A PACKAGE PRODUCED THEREBY

MARK-UP ACCOMPANYING AMENDMENT

Hon. Commissioner of
Patents and Trademarks
Washington, DC 20231

November 1, 2002

Sir:

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Please amend the specification pursuant to 37 C.F.R. 1.121 as follows:

Please add the following paragraph on a new page titled, "Abstract of the

Serial No. 09/582,830
Mark-up Accompanying Amendment

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Page 1

Disclosure" after the claims.

The invention relates to a method and package for packaging a web. In the method of the invention, a web is slit into two or more narrower webs which are folded into superimposed layers. The method comprises the steps of directing the webs to a nip formed by two rotating reels and by inducing the webs, held alternately against the surfaces of the first and the second reel, to move with the reel the length of a predetermined rotational angle to provide folding, and joining the ends of the webs together so that the webs form a continuous whole whose length corresponds to the combined length of the webs.

On page 1, please add the following heading after the title and before the first paragraph:

Field of the Invention

On page 1, please add the following heading after the first paragraph at line 4:

Background of the Invention

On page 2, please delete paragraph 6 at line 23, and replace it with the following

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Mark-up Accompanying Amendment

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Page 2

heading:

Brief Description of the Drawings

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims pursuant to 37 C.F.R. 1.121 as follows (see the accompanying "marked-up version pursuant to 1.121):

12. (Amended) A method of packaging a web[, the method] comprising:

slitting [the] a web to form a slit web of [into] two or more narrower webs;

and

folding the [two or more narrower webs] slit web into superimposed layers

by:

directing the [two or more narrower webs] slit web to a nip formed by first and second rotating reels,

inducing the [two or more narrower webs] slit web to move with the first and second rotating reels a length of a predetermined rotational angle to provide folding of the two or more narrower webs of the slit web by holding the two or more narrower webs alternatively against surfaces of the first and second rotating reels to form adjacent stacks, the narrower web of each stack having a first end and a second end, and

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joining the ends of the two or more narrower webs together so that the two or more narrower webs form a continuous whole whose length corresponds to a combined length of the two or more narrower webs.

13. (Amended) The method [as claimed in] of claim 12, wherein the step of joining the ends of the two or more narrower webs comprises joining a [forward/tail] first end of an outermost [web] stack to a [forward/tail] second end of an adjacent [web] stack, whose [forward/tail] first end is joined to a [forward/tail] second end of a next adjacent [web] stack, the joining process continuing until all of the webs are joined to form a continuous whole whose length corresponds to the combined length of the two or more narrower webs.

14. (Amended) The method [as claimed in] of claim 12, wherein the step of joining the ends of the two or more narrow webs comprises joining [forward/tail] the first ends of the two or more stacks [narrower webs] in pairs [to form a stack], the pairs being formed at one end of the stacks [webs] beginning with an outermost stack [web], and at the other end[s] the pairs being formed starting from the stack [web] next to the outermost [web] stack, the webs of the stacks forming a continuous whole whose length corresponds to the combined length of the two or more narrower webs.

15. (Amended) The method [as claimed in] of claim 12, wherein the step of holding the two or more narrower webs alternatively against surfaces of the first and second rotating reels comprises holding the webs against the surfaces of [the first and second rotating] said reels by mechanical engagement of the web by means disposed on the surfaces of [the first and second rotating] said reels.

16. (Amended) The method [as claimed in] of claim 15, wherein the means comprises at least one mechanical gripper and at least one projection extending outwardly from a periphery of the first and second rotating reels.

17. (Amended) The method [as claimed in] of claim 12, wherein the step of holding the two or more narrower webs comprises holding the webs against the surfaces of the first and second rotating reels by mechanical engagement of the web by suction using underpressure.

18. (Amended) The method [as claimed in] of claim 12, wherein [joining of] the ends of the two or more narrower webs are joined by a [comprises joining the ends together using one or more] process selected from the group consisting of sewing, taping, gluing, needling, hot sealing, ultrasound sealing, and stapling.

Please cancel claims 19-25.

Please add the following new claim:

26. (New) A method of packaging a web comprising:

- (a) providing a web;
- (b) slitting the web into two or more narrower webs;
- (c) directing the webs to a nip formed by a first and second rotating reels;
- (d) inducing the webs to shift with the reel the length of a predetermined

rotational angle to provide folding by holding the webs alternately against the surfaces of the first and second reels which rotate in opposite directions to pull the reel forward; and

- (e) ¹⁸joining the ends of the webs so that the webs form a continuous whole whose length corresponds to the combined length of the webs.